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CYNEWULF'S *ELENE* 1262 f.

AFTER much discussion the meaning of the clause *þær him e(o)h fore / milpaðas mæt* 1262 f. is still a matter of speculation. Holthausen rightly understands *fore* as adverb, but asks "Was bedeutet aber *him fore*?" (Edition, p. 95). That we have to start from the local sense, was recognized by Cosijn, who translated 'vor ihm' but added the interesting remark: "Voor hem kan echter daarom niet op Cynewulf doelen, omdat de dichter stellig niet achter het paard liep of op zijn 'aardschen pelgrims-tocht' in een reis- of strijdswagen gezeten was."¹ Surely it would be erroneous to assume that strictly local sense which would make the author sit in a carriage, since he is no doubt thought of as riding on a horse. The proper interpretation, it seems to me, is suggested by a passage in the *Beowulf*: *ne mæg byrnan hring / æfter wigfruman wide feras / hæleðum be healfe* 2260, in which *æfter* does not denote 'post obitum' (Grein, *Sprachschatz* 1. 53), but, literally, 'behind,' 'following,' hence 'along with.' Evidently the coat of mail 'follows' the warrior who bears it into battle (of *Beow.* 333: *hwanon ferigeað ge . . . græge syrcan . . . ?*), i. e., goes along with him (*hæleðum be healfe*), or—we may say—he takes it along with him. Similarly, the horse which bears the rider (cf. *El.* 1196) may be considered as taking the lead and, in running *onward*, making the man, as it were, follow him: *þær him e(o)h fore milpaðas mæt*.²

A different conception, by the way, is expressed by the peculiar phrase *mearh under modegum*, *El.* 1193 (see *H. Archiv* 104 291).

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¹This is quoted from Trautmann, *Kynewulf*, p. 66.

²Those who think this interpretation too far-fetched, will find it possible to fall back on the sense of 'coram' (Rieger), which could be made to apply—though not without straining—to the man on horseback.